

The Best Gift of All



Bobby's Christmas Gift

By Winnifred Bartor

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"I'M GOING to write Santa Claus a letter asking him to bring me the things for Christmas I want," said Bobby Sawyer. "Mamma says that because papa won't ever come home any more we can't have any Christmas gift. I don't see why, because papa was lost at sea, Santa Claus won't come as he used to. I hear of children writing to Santa for what they want and I'm going to write to him, too."

So Bobby sat down and wrote his letter. He spelled bugle, bugle, and Christmas, Crismus, and some of the words were so bungled that the old fellow must have had a hard time deciphering them; but all the things Bob wanted were named in the letter and he did not doubt for a moment that Santa Claus would respond generously.

One morning shortly before Christmas, Peter the postman left a letter at the door addressed to Robert Sawyer. Peter who had long delivered the letters of the Sawyer family would not



Wrote His Letter.

give it to anybody but Bobby, saying that Santa Claus required him to give any letters marked "from Kris Kringle" to the child to whom it was addressed and to no one else. Bobby opened it and read:

"Dear Bobby:
"I have received your letter and will bring you the finest Christmas present you ever received in your life."

"SANTA CLAUS."
Bob of course was delighted with this, and he noticed that from the time of its receipt everything about the house seemed to take on a certain cheerfulness. Bobby laid in wait for Peter when he came again and asked him a lot of questions as to how and where Santa Claus gave him the letter. Peter said that he was not permitted to tell children anything about Santa Claus. They must hang up their stockings and wait for him to fill them.

This was three days before Christmas. Bobby who was very watchful detected his mother smuggling in cer-

tain packages. This puzzled him, for his mamma had told him there would be no gifts this year and he did not expect any except what Santa Claus would bring. Bobby asked his mother if what she brought in was intended for Christmas, but she gave him no satisfaction, though she took him in her arms and gave him a bear hug and a dozen kisses. She seemed as happy as if she expected Santa Claus to bring everything she wanted for Christmas.

The day before Christmas a messenger boy came with a telegram for Mrs. Sawyer. She tore off the envelope and read it, and looked very happy, giving the messenger a half dollar. Bobby asked what the telegram was about. She told him it was about a Christmas gift she and all the rest of the family were to receive, and when Bobby kept asking again and again "What is it mamma?" she gave him another bear hug and smothered him with kisses.

Bobby had a sister, Edith, twelve years old, and a brother Jim, ten. Both of them were too old to sympathize with Bobby in his faith in Santa Claus bringing him the gift he had promised him in his letter. Indeed they didn't believe Santa Claus really wrote letters to children. Bobby tried his best to get out of Edith or Jim what made their mother so happy, but they would not tell. Indeed they seemed almost as happy as she. Having failed with them Bobby tried Peter the postman. Peter said he suspected Santa Claus had something to do with the family happiness, but he was not sure. So poor Bobby was obliged to swallow his curiosity and wait for Christmas morning.

Bobby went to bed on Christmas eve determined to resist the sandman and keep his eyes open all night, so that he might get a glimpse of Santa Claus and see what his remarkable gift was. But the sandman soon began to drop sand in Bobby's lids, and he was asleep in ten minutes after his head struck the pillow.

When Bobby awoke the sun was quite high in the heavens. He heard the word "Bobby!" shouted in his ears and at the same time felt himself gently shaken. He did not awaken by degrees, but all at once. And there standing before him and looking down upon him, smiling, was his papa.

"Why, papa!" he exclaimed, "I thought you were never going to come home any more."

"Santa Claus told me that he was to bring me home to my little boy for a Christmas gift."

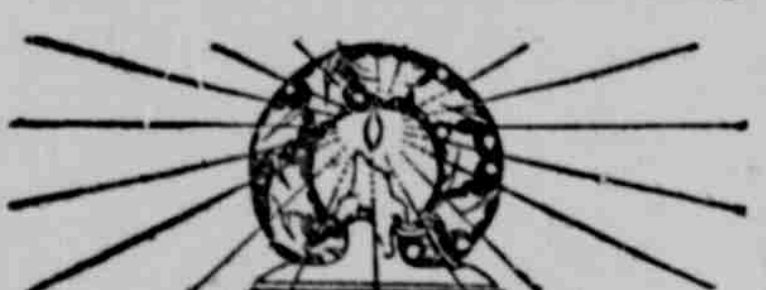
Bobby threw his arms around his father's neck and hugged and hugged, and it seemed that he would never



"Why, Papa!" He Exclaimed.

let go. Mamma, and Edith and Jim came in and so great was the excitement that Bobby forgot to look for what was in his stocking.

That was certainly the happiest Christmas the Sawyer family ever spent or ever would spend. Bobby was too young to have it all explained to him, but when he is older his mother intends to tell him that his father was on a vessel that was torpedoed and sunk. Mr. Sawyer was reported missing, but he was picked up out of the water by an American cruiser and in time managed to get home. After word came that he was saved the letter was written to Bobby by his sister as from Santa Claus, and afterwards a telegram came saying that his father would be home on Christmas morning.



OBSERVING THE PROPRIETIES



Expensive presents to a girl
At Christmas time, are
not good taste
As that's the case, the dia-
mond brooch
I give to Mary will be 'paste'



May the Christmas season bring joys of Peace to You; and in the coming year may there be no Embargo on your happiness; may your opportunities not be Entrenched; may the Battles of the past be forgotten, and the Bugle call lead you on to loved ones who love you, and watch over you.

Christmas Is Children's Day

The message of Christmas is love. Its emblem is radiant, thankful, contented childhood. Without love and without children there could be no real Christmas. The form might survive but the substance would be lacking.

Unhappy must be the adult who cannot make himself a child again in spirit at the Yuletide. For Christmas is the universal children's day. Men and women are superfluous except as they make themselves partners with those whom the day glorifies.

Let us, then, lay aside the affectation and arrogance of manhood and womanhood and be children again. Let us adopt their point of view and put ourselves in their places—in the places of these sons and daughters of ours and of the sons and daughters of our neighbors. It was only a year or two ago, as it seems, when we hung our well-worn stockings in a row along the mantel shelf, while our fathers and mothers looked on with unfeigned pleasure at the innocent confidence we showed in what the morrow would bring forth.

Even as you and I. It all comes back in a flood of memories. Life was simpler then. Our desires were less pretentious than those our children voice now. Modest remembrances they were that buoyed toe and heel of the stockings mother knit.

Life and its circumstances change, but the essence of Christmas never. The same happy childhood, the same restlessness, the same snail-like creeping of time as the holiday approaches. The same parenthood, too—the same planning across the reading table after the boys and girls are abed, the same loving consideration of what this or that child most desires and how far the family purse can properly be stretched to permit some further purchase.

Every home is assured a Christmas if it has a great, warm heart pulsating in tune with the hopes and joys of childhood.—Exchange.

A Christmas Wireless.
To you and yours a wireless
Along the Good-will line
It brings a Christmas greeting
With love from me and mine.

His Guess.
"Who was it said to him that hath shall be given?"
"I don't remember, but I presume it was some fellow who had eight or nine necktie holders and had just received four more for Christmas."

The Christmas Doll



There once was a doll on a Christmas tree,
Who sighed to the angel that hung above,
"Oh, how I do wish they would keep for me
A sweet little, neat little girl to love;
"A dear little mother to curl my locks,
To rock me to sleep, and to wake me up.
To dress me in cute little gowns and frocks,
And feed me with milk from her silver cup;
"A kind little mother, who'd never say
A word that was angry, nor let me fall;
Who'd always be ready to let me play
With bright little friends who should come to call!"
And, strange though the wonderful fact may be,
That little wax doll's little wish came true;
They picked her right off the Christmas tree,
And gave her, my dear little girl, to you!
—Arthur Guerman in the Youth's Companion.

St. Winnifred and the Tree

One story of the origin of the green tree as the Christmas tree among the people of northern Europe is given in a legend of St. Winnifred. It is one of the many thousands of those simple and beautiful beliefs that have attached themselves to the midwinter festival and which generally pass now under the name of "Christmas myths." It is related that St. Winnifred, a great Christian missionary, began cutting down a "sacred" oak which had been the object of worship by the northern pagans whom he was seeking to lead aright. While he was hewing down the huge tree it was blasted by a sudden whirlwind. Close beside it was a young fir tree, which was not harmed either by the whirlwind or by the fall of the giant oak. Then St. Winnifred is reported to have spoken as follows to the pagans:

"This little tree, a young child of the forest, shall be your holy tree tonight. It is the wood of peace, for your homes are built of it. It is the sign of an endless life, for its leaves are always green. See how it points toward heaven! Let this be called the tree of the Christ Child. Gather about it; not in the wild woods, but in your homes; there it will shelter no deeds of blood, but loving gifts and acts of kindness."

The fir tree, the common evergreen of the northern regions, became the holy tree of the converted pagans, and in its honor or in memory of the thoughts it stood for they decorated it with lights and gifts at Christmas.

NOTHING HAPPENED.



She sat beneath the mistletoe
Without the slightest fear;
She felt no wild, glad tremor, though
She sat there calm and unafraid,
And sleepily he yawned, for they'd
Been married for a year.



Women all over the world realize more and more that their work at home helped the men at the Front. It involved great sacrifices, hard work and unusual physical strength. Women at home should study nursing for the home. A good way to learn is to ask your druggist for a copy or send 50c to publishers of the "Medical Adviser," 663 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y., and get a copy of their 1,000 page book bound in cloth, with chapters on First Aid, Taking Care of the Sick or Wounded, Physiology, Hygiene, Anatomy, Sex Problems, Mother and Babe. Nobody, man or woman, can do good work when health is impaired. If a woman is nervous or has dizzy spells, suffers from awful pains at regular or irregular intervals she should turn to a tonic made up of herbs, and without alcohol, which makes weak women strong and sick women well. It is Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. Send Dr. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y., 10 cents for trial package.

Kokomo, Ind.—"I can say something for Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. For sometime I suffered from nervousness and general run-down condition. I lost my appetite and the doctors did not seem to help me. I had one of Dr. Pierce's Common Sense Medical Advisers in the house for about seven years and I started to read it. I found that 'Favorite Prescription' was what I needed and thought I would try it. It helped me in many ways and built up my system. I regained my appetite and felt better. It gave me the strength to do work that I had not been able to do for some time previous. I can recommend the 'Prescription' to others."
—Mrs. J. A. McGee, 821 E. Taylor St.

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Was His Own Fault.

"Mercy!" exclaimed the presiding elder, gazing shocked out of the window. "I believe your children are trying to kill one of their number, Brother Johnson! Ah!—now they have set upon him with clubs and are beating him savagely. You can hear his cries, and—"

"Aw, the one that's doing the yelling ain't none of my young 'uns," nonchalantly replied Gap Johnson of Rumpus Ridge. "He belongs to one of the neighbors—I can tell that by the fact that he ain't swearing. Something wrong with that kid, anyhow; every time he gets heated up he comes over yur for another beating."—Kansas City Star.

How's This?

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